

## **What is Grief?**

**Age Level:** Primary (3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade)

**Time:** 60 min

**Materials:**

Grief handout (x15)

Pens

Markers

Colored Pencils

**Target Objective:** Grief Psychoed

**Goal:** Help students define grief in thoughts, feelings, body and relationships.

**Description of Activity:**

1. Provide each student with a grief handout.
2. Have each student write, draw and/or discuss the layers of grief: in our thoughts, in our feelings, in our body and in our relationships.
3. Facilitate a discussion around what students identified

**Discussion Questions:**

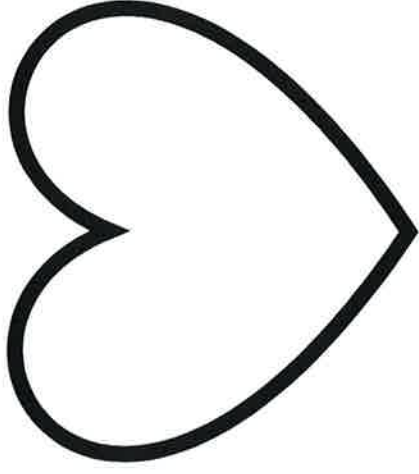
1. Discuss the layers of grief
2. Discuss the themes that students identified
3. Discuss how no one grieves the same; grief is like fingerprints and snowflakes

**Closing:** A closing should provide a definition of grief along with honoring how everyone grieves differently.

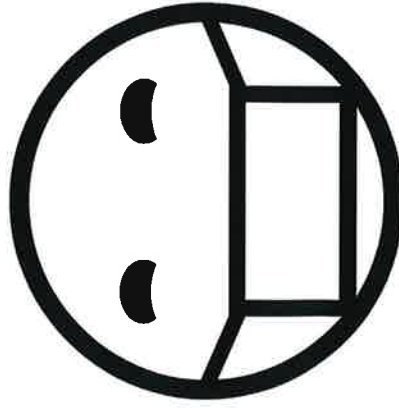
Thoughts



Feelings



Body



Relationships



# Grief

When someone we love dies. We grieve. Grief has many layers. It is our thoughts, our feelings, how our body feels, and the changes in our relationships. Everyone's grief looks different. Write down one or more words under each layer of grief.

## **Before and After**

**Age Level:** Primary (3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade)

**Time:** 60 min

**Materials:**

- Before and After Handouts (x15)
- Pencils
- Pens
- Markers

**Target Objective:** Processing Grief

**Goal:** To allow students the opportunity to compare their experiences before and after the loss.

**Description of Activity:**

1. Give student the option to fold paper in half or draw a line down the center
2. Title one side Before and the other half titled After
3. Students can write, draw pictures or discuss what their experience looked like before and after their person died
4. Once students have completed their activity, facilitate a group discussion

**Discussion Questions:**

1. Discuss changes (roles, responsibilities, family dynamics, peers, environment, mood, etc)
2. Discuss something that changed that you wish would have stayed the same and/or something that stayed the same that you wish would change
3. Discuss challenges associated with the change(s)
4. Discuss how a student might cope with those changes

**Closing:** A closing should include a summary about these change(s), acknowledging the stories shared by students and ways to cope with change.

**Before**

**After**

## **Feeling's Heart Mandala**

**Age Level:** Primary (3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade)

**Time:** 60 min

**Materials:**

Feelings Heart Mandala handouts x 15  
Feelings chart  
Colored paper  
Markers  
Pencils  
Pens  
Scissors  
Glue

**Target Objective:** Psychoed

**Goal:** Help students identify feelings/emotions related to their experience. This intervention also decreases isolation by students sharing common feelings.

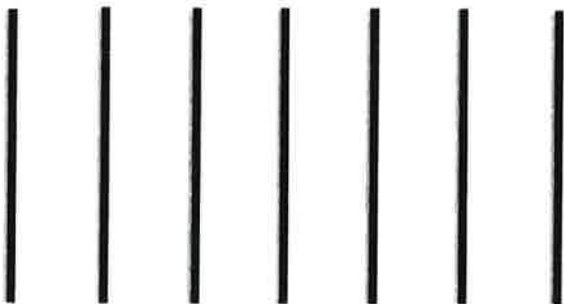
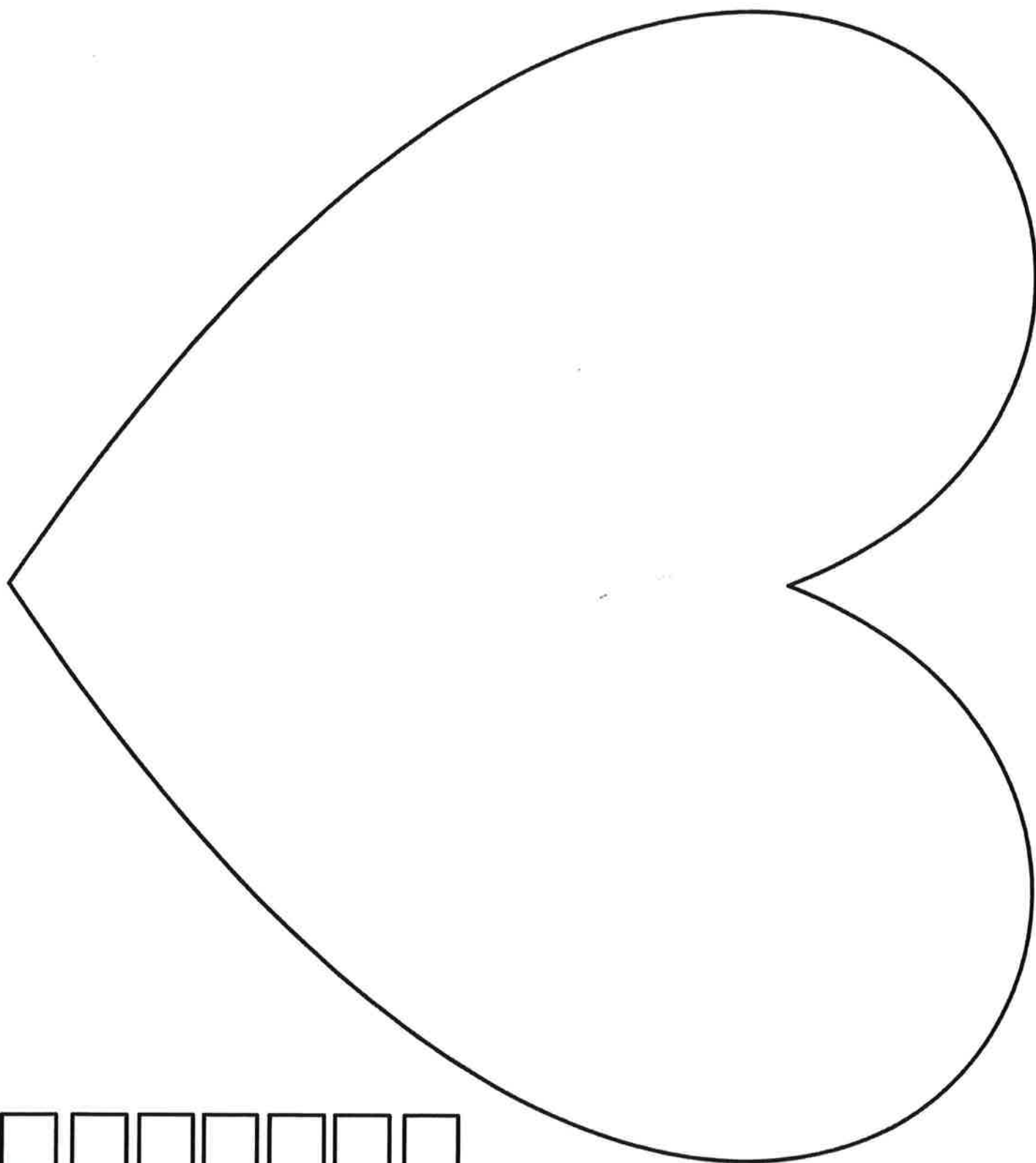
**Description of Activity:**

1. Provide students with feelings heart mandala handout.
2. Have a dialogue around the feelings students have experienced since their person died.
3. Instruct them to color in, cut/rip paper or draw what feelings live in their heart since their person died.
4. Facilitate sharing with the group.

**Discussion Questions:**

1. Ask the group to talk about feelings/emotions that were mentioned that surprised them
2. Ask the group if they think all of the emotions listed are healthy and ok to have
3. Talk with the group about who they share these feelings/emotions with
4. Have certain feelings/emotions ever concerned you?
5. Are there times when they are the heaviest?

**Closing:** A closing should summarize that all feelings/emotions are valid and ok to have. The facilitator can also weave in that heavy feelings/emotions should have healthy outlets.



## **Body Survey and Outline**

**Age Level:** Primary (3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade)

**Time:** 60 min

**Materials:**

Body Surveys and Outlines (x15)  
Markers  
Crayons  
Pencils  
Pens

**Target Objective:** Grief Psycho-education

**Goal:** To allow students to identify where grief can present in their body.

**Description of Activity:**

1. Provide each student with a body survey and body outline handout
2. Facilitator reads body survey to students while students follow along rating their experience
3. After the survey is completed, students will draw or write in the body outline where grief prominently presents itself
4. Facilitate students sharing their body outline and survey responses (each student shares their top three grief-impacted areas)

**Discussion Questions:**

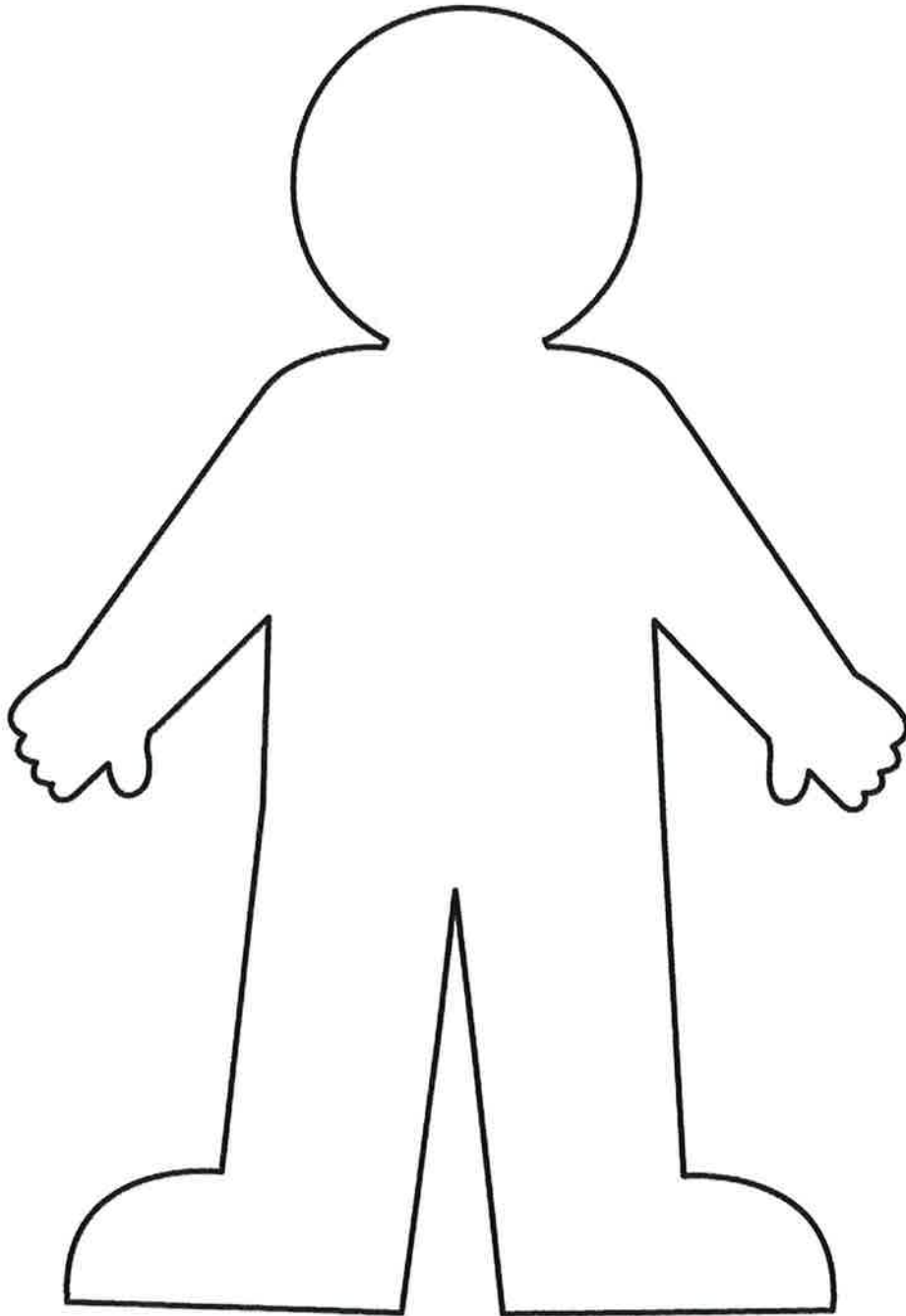
1. Discuss with the group how grief presents in a physical way in the body
2. Discuss with the group any symptoms that were not included in the survey
3. Discuss ways to cope when grief manifests in the body

**Closing:** A closing should summarize the most common places in the body where grief presents itself and ways to cope with physical manifestations.

	Never   Sometimes   Always				
1. My body feels weak.	1	2	3	4	5
2. My body feels numb.	1	2	3	4	5
3. My head aches.	1	2	3	4	5
4. My head feels dizzy.	1	2	3	4	5
5. My throat feels blocked.	1	2	3	4	5
6. My shoulders feel tight/tense.	1	2	3	4	5
7. My chest feels tight/tense.	1	2	3	4	5
8. My chest feels heavy/weighted.	1	2	3	4	5
9. My heart feels like it beats really fast.	1	2	3	4	5
10. My stomach aches.	1	2	3	4	5
11. My stomach feels sick.	1	2	3	4	5
12. My stomach feels nervous (like I have butterflies in it).	1	2	3	4	5
13. My hands feel sweaty.	1	2	3	4	5
14. My arms feel weak.	1	2	3	4	5
15. My arms feel shaky.	1	2	3	4	5
16. My legs feel weak.	1	2	3	4	5
17. My legs feel shaky.	1	2	3	4	5



Circle the places where you feel grief in your body the most.



## **Coping Skills**

**Age Level:** Primary (3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade)

**Time:** 60 min

### **Materials:**

Coping skills handouts (x15)  
Icon list of coping skills (x15)  
Pencils  
Pens  
Markers

**Target Objective:** Coping Skills

**Goal:** Help students identify and increase the use of positive coping skills

### **Description of Activity:**






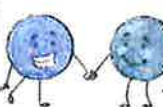





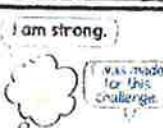


















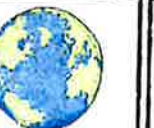


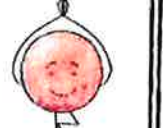
1. Provide each student with a coping skills toolbox and collage cards
2. Have students cut and glue the coping skills that they already utilize and/or are willing to try
3. Facilitate a discussion around what students identified
4. Discuss if more than one coping skill can be utilized at the same time

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. Discuss coping skills that students are already aware of
2. Discuss new coping skills for students to try
3. Discuss how to access new coping skills
4. Discuss way to replace negative coping skills with adaptive coping skills

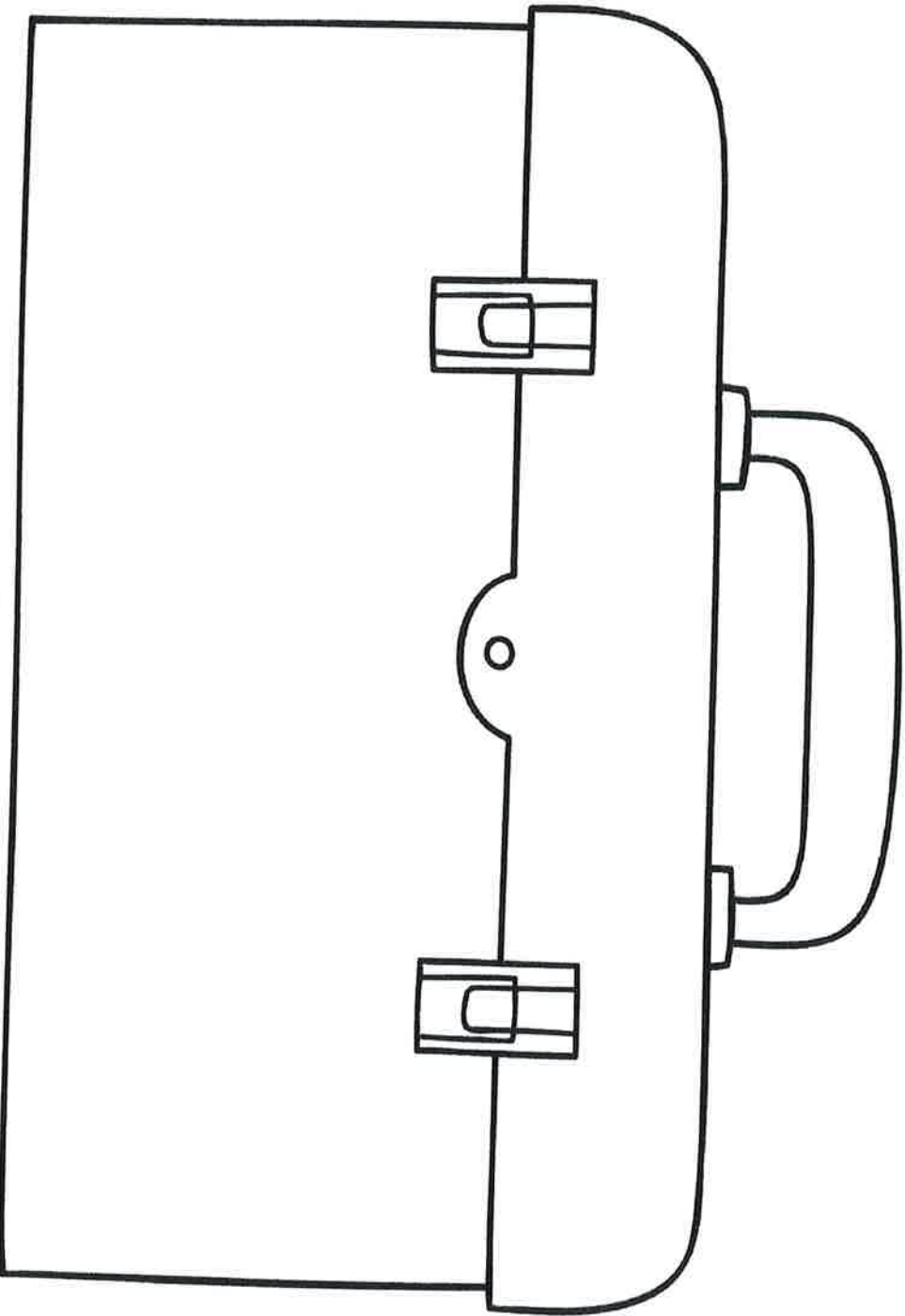
**Closing:** A closing should summarize what coping skills are, when and how to use coping skills when grieving.

# Healthy Coping Tools Collage Cards

 Read a Book or Magazine	 Play a Board Game	 Garden or Do Yardwork	 Create Origami	 Stretch	 Listen to Music
 Hug or Climb a Tree	 Do Something Kind	 Jump On A Trampoline	 Cook or Bake	 Make Art	 Use a Stress Ball or Other Fidget Tool
 Journal or Write a Letter	 Make & Play with Slime	 Cuddle or Play with Your Pet	 Ask for Help	 Use Positive Affirmations	 Get Plenty of Sleep
 Use Kind & Compassionate Self-Talk	 Discover Treasures in Nature	 Practice Gratitude	 Talk to Someone You Trust	 Take Slow, Mindful Breaths	 Kick, Bounce or Throw a Ball
 Make a Collage or Scrapbook	 Take a Shower or Bath	 Smile & Laugh	 Weave, Knit or Crochet	 Clean, Declutter or Organize	 Take or Look at Photographs
 Rest, Nap or Take a Break	 Exercise	 Blow Bubbles	 Build Something	 Use Aromatherapy	 Eat Healthy
 Go on a Hike, Walk or Run	 Drink a Warm Cup of Tea	 Do a Puzzle	 Get a Hug	 Cry	 Play Outside
 Take Good Care of the Earth	 Forgive, Let Go Move On	 Ride a Bike or Skateboard	 Visualize a Calm & Peaceful Place	 Try or Learn Something New	 Sing and/or Dance
 Drink Water	 Practive Yoga				



# MY COPING TOOLBOX



## **Sharing My Story**

**Age Level:** Primary (3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade)

**Time:** 60 min

**Materials:**

Sharing My Story handouts (x15)

Markers

Pencils

Pens

**Target Objective:** Processing Grief

**Goal:** To learn more about the details surrounding the death.

**Description of Activity:**

1. Provide each student with Sharing My Story handout.
2. Introduce the activity by inviting students to share their story. For example, saying “most people don’t get to share the full day of events that happened the day that some dies uninterrupted, this is your chance to share your story. While sharing is happening, it is important that we remember the rules. Sharing this day can be really hard to do. Your body knows that it is ok and normal if you cry, have a shaky voice, a nervous stomach, and sweaty palms. Some of you might talk very matter of fact and some of you might struggle. Let’s agree that we are going to support everyone here today as they share their story.”
3. Remind them about deep breathing. Have them practice taking a few deep breaths in.
4. Students can write, draw pictures or discuss the prompts located on the handout
5. Once students have completed their activity, facilitate a group discussion.

**Discussion Questions:**

1. Ask students to share one or all their sections.
2. Thank each student for sharing.
3. Allow students to ask follow up questions to each other.
4. Validate what you heard and move to the next person to share.

**Closing:** A closing should start with thanking students for having the courage to share their story. Guide students in taking a deep breath. Share with students that every time they share their story another piece of them heals or helps to heal someone else. Discuss self-care and ask students to tell the group what they plan to do for self-care today.

**\* Time management will be critical on this day.**

**Sharing My Story**

*Write or draw the answers to each question*

<b>Who died?</b>	<b>Where were you when you found out?</b>
<b>How did they die?</b>	<b>How did you feel when you heard that your person died?</b>
<b>Who was all there when you found out?</b>	<b>Who told you that your person died?</b>



## **Grief Bingo**

**Age Level:** Primary (3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade)

**Time:** 60 min

**Materials:**

Grief Bingo Cards (x15)

Bingo Markers

**Target Objective:** Decrease Isolation

**Goal:** Help students identify common grief-related themes shared as a group.

**Description of Activity:**

1. Provide each student with a grief bingo card and bingo markers
2. Read aloud themes and have students mark board if this was an experience they had
3. Facilitate a discussion around themes identified on board

**Discussion Questions:**

1. Ask the group if they want to share why they chose to fill in that box after each box is read aloud. Example: "I see that some of you chose to fill in that box, I am wondering if anyone would like to share what their experience was?"
2. Highlight common themes/experiences in the group

**Closing:** A closing should summarize major themes that highlighted vast differences within the group along with the themes that connected the group. Facilitator will close by normalizing and talking about how grief is unique to everyone and how it is not beneficial to compare your grief with others.

# G R I E F

Sad	Big days that I will miss them	I have something special of theirs	My body hurts	Happy
Bad dreams	Guilt	My family and friends changed	Confused	I wonder where they are
I fear that someone else will die	I can't talk to my family		Anger	I miss them
Had to move	Crying is ok	Jealous	I have ways to feel better when I am sad	I never got to say goodbye
I talk about what I am going through with others	I'm having a hard time at school	Scared or worried	I have hope that things will get better	I changed



# G R I E F

I talk about what I am going through with others	Big days that I will miss them	I have something special of theirs	Anger	Happy
Had to move	Guilt	Jealous	Confused	I miss them
I fear that someone else will die	I'm having a hard time at school		My body hurts	I wonder where they are
Bad dreams	Crying is ok	My family and friends changed	I have ways to feel better when I am sad	I never got to say goodbye
Sad	I can't talk to my family	Scared or worried	I have hope that things will get better	I changed

# G R I E F

Sad	Happy	I have something special of theirs	My body hurts	Big days that I will miss them
Scared or worried	I have hope that things will get better	I changed	Confused	Crying is ok
I fear that someone else will die	I can't talk to my family		Anger	I miss them
I never got to say goodbye	I wonder where they are	Jealous	I have ways to feel better when I am sad	Had to move
I talk about what I am going through with others	I'm having a hard time at school	Bad dreams	Guilt	My family and friends changed

# G R I E F

Bad dreams	Big days that I will miss them	I have something special of theirs	I have ways to feel better when I am sad	I changed
Sad	Crying is ok	My family and friends changed	Confused	I wonder where they are
I fear that someone else will die	I can't talk to my family		I miss them	Anger
I talk about what I am going through with others	Guilt	Scared or worried	My body hurts	I never got to say goodbye
Had to move	I'm having a hard time at school	Jealous	I have hope that things will get better	Happy

# G R I E F

Happy	Big days that I will miss them	I have something special of theirs	My body hurts	Sad
Bad dreams	Confused	My family and friends changed	Guilt	I wonder where they are
I fear that someone else will die	I can't talk to my family		Anger	I miss them
Had to move	Jealous	Crying is ok	I have ways to feel better when I am sad	I never got to say goodbye
Scared or worried	I'm having a hard time at school	I talk about what I am going through with others	I have hope that things will get better	I changed

# G R I E F

Sad	My body hurts	I have something special of theirs	Big days that I will miss them	Happy
Confused	Guilt	My family and friends changed	Bad dreams	I wonder where they are
Anger	I miss them		Anger	I can't talk to my family
Had to move	I have ways to feel better when I am sad	Jealous	Crying is ok	I never got to say goodbye
I changed	I'm having a hard time at school	Scared or worried	I have hope that things will get better	I talk about what I am going through with others

# G R I E F

Jealous	Big days that I will miss them	I have something special of theirs	My body hurts	I changed
Bad dreams	Confused	My family and friends changed	Guilt	I wonder where they are
I fear that someone else will die	I can't talk to my family		Anger	Crying is ok
Had to move	I miss them	Sad	I'm having a hard time at school	I never got to say goodbye
I talk about what I am going through with others	I have ways to feel better when I am sad	Scared or worried	I have hope that things will get better	Happy

## I Am Supported

**Age Level:** Primary (3-5<sup>th</sup> Grade)

**Time:** 60 min

**Materials:**

Support Systems Books (x15) \* Needs prepping  
Pens  
Pencils  
Markers

**Target Objective:** Support Systems

**Goal:** Help students identify who in their life is there to support them.

**Description of Activity:**

1. Prep books: use one color page as your outer cover page and 3-4 white pages. Fold them in half and staple alongside the folder crease. This will create a mini booklet.
2. Provide each student with a handmade paper booklet.
3. Ask students to write and draw the people they have identified as someone who they can talk to or trust.

**Discussion Questions:**

1. Tell us who is closest to you and why?
2. Share more about why they made it into your support book?
3. Can you add more to your support book over time? Can people drop out of your book? If so, what would make that happen?
4. Is there anyone that you wish was more supportive of you?

**Closing:** A closing should summarize the importance of finding support while in grief. Grief is not meant to be held alone. It is important to identify those that can lend you a helping hand.

